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What is the “Be Your Best” Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)?

The DPP was a major clinical trial aimed at discovering whether either diet and exercise or the oral diabetes drug Metformin could prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes in people with impaired glucose tolerance (IGT). The answer is yes. In fact, the DPP found that over the three years of the study, diet and exercise sharply reduced the chances that a person with IGT would develop diabetes. Metformin also reduced risk, although less dramatically and less cost-effectively. The DPP resolved the questions so quickly that, on the advice of an external monitoring board, the program was halted a year early. The researchers published their findings in the February 7, 2002, issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

Participants in the lifestyle intervention group—those receiving intensive counseling on effective diet, exercise, and behavior modification—reduced their risk of developing diabetes by 58 percent. This finding was true across all participating ethnic groups and for both men and women. Lifestyle changes worked particularly well for participants aged 60 and older, reducing their risk by 71 percent. Participants taking Metformin reduced their risk of developing diabetes by 31 percent. Metformin was effective for both men and women, but it was least effective in people aged 45 and older.

Researchers believe that weight loss—achieved through better eating habits and exercise—reduces the risk of diabetes by improving the ability of the body to use insulin and process glucose. The DPP's striking results tell us that millions of high-risk people can modify their diet and exercise to lose a small amount of weight to delay or prevent the development of type 2 diabetes.

The Montana Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) provides funding in several Montana communities for delivery of this structure evidence based program. Missoula City-County Health Department received funding to deliver the program beginning in January 2011. We offer the program four times per year.

Who qualifies for the program?

Eligibility criteria include being age 18 or older, not pregnant, at least 6 months pos-partum, and a BMI of 25 or more. In addition, applicants must have one or more of the following risk factors: high blood pressure, pre-diabetes (blood glucose between 100 and 125 mg/dL), elevated cholesterol, triglycerides, or LDL, or low HDL. For women, additional risk factors include history of gestational diabetes or having delivered a baby weighing more than 9 pounds.

How does a person apply for the program?

Step 1: Eligibility is first determined. **Step 2:** Participant will schedule and complete fasting blood work with their healthcare provider or employee screening program. This includes blood pressure, lipid panel (LDL, HDL, triglycerides) and blood glucose. **Step 3:** Medical clearance form completed and signed by health care provider. **Step 4:** Participants then meet individually with lifestyle coach and review goals, plans, and challenges prior to beginning the program.

How is the program staffed? Registered dietitians, one of whom is a certified yoga instructor and group exercise specialist facilitate the program. The multi-disciplinary team includes a certified personal trainer, UM pharmacy professor, a licensed professional counselor with expertise in motivational interviewing.

How would you describe the “Be Your Best” program?

This structured program involves the following:

1. The initial screening of applicant's eligibility includes an assessment of their motivation and readiness to engage in physical activity and weight management.
2. 16 one-hour weekly sessions covering nutrition, health eating, physical activity, stress management and motivation. This intensive lifestyle modification (healthy diet, moderate physical activity of 30 minutes a day 5 days a week), over time, becomes easier and more the "norm" for participants.
3. Guided group exercise is provided including free passes to local fitness centers with reduced membership fees for program participants; Zumba classes, yoga, water aerobics, group walks, indoor cycling, and resistance training.
4. Individual medical nutrition therapy sessions with a registered dietitian are encouraged and available
5. Self monitoring of calorie and fat intake, exercise minutes, lab results, weekly weights is required.
6. Weekly anthropometric measurements plus baseline and two periodic glucose, lipid panel, and blood pressure readings are entered into a state managed data base to use for program monitoring and evaluation. In addition, periodic progress reports are sent to referring physicians.
7. After the initial 16 week program is complete, participants meet monthly for 6 months in "after core" classes and for education, weight checks and group support.
8. Labs are repeated at the end of the initial 16 week course and again at the end of the entire 10 month program to give the participants additional feedback on how lifestyle changes affect their health.

What results have been observed in the MCCHD "Be Your Best" program?

Among 86 participants actively participating in the program, 908 pounds were lost in the initial 16 week period, or an average of 10.5 pounds per person. Individual weight loss ranged from zero to 42 pounds. Forty-four percent of the participants achieved the 7% weight loss goal.

How does the Diabetes Prevention Program meet the US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations for the Affordable Care Act?

- Intensive behavioral dietary counseling for adult patients with hyperlipidemia and other known risk factors for cardiovascular and diet-related chronic disease. Intensive counseling can be delivered by primary care clinicians or by referral to other specialists, such as nutritionists or dietitians.
- Screening all adult patients for obesity and offer intensive counseling and behavioral interventions to promote sustained weight loss for obese adults.

What employers are offering this preventive service through MCCHD?

- Missoula County
- City of Missoula
- Missoula County Public Schools

For information on the Missoula City-County Health Department "Be Your Best" program, contact:

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